

Project Review Committee Process and Project Review Scoring Guidance

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I. Project Review Committee Process

Pursuant the California Department of Water Resources' (DWR) SGMA Grant PSP, the Borrego Water District and the Borrego Springs Watermaster have been discussing the Project Review Committee Process as it relates to the preparation of a competitive and eligible suite of projects that meet the intent of the GMP ([Groundwater Management Plan – Borrego Springs Water Master - Documents \(borregospringswatermaster.com\)](#)); the State's SGMA legislation; the Budget Act of 2021; Proposition 68; and DWR's SGM Grant Program SGMA Implementation Guidelines ([SGM Grant Program SGMA Implementation Guidelines \(ca.gov\)](#), December 2021); and the SGM Grant Program SGMA Implementation PSP (December 2021, ([2021 SGMA Implementation PSP \(ca.gov\)](#)).

The language below has been extracted from the December 2021 the SGM Grant Program SGMA Implementation PSP and outlines potential options for a Project Review Committee process:

1. Depending on the COD Basin, the applicants should develop a project review committee that are responsible for completing a self-evaluation for a project using the scoring criteria outlined in Table 7. The project review committee should include a representative for each entity within a GSA, a representative from each GSA within the basin if there are multiple GSAs, a representative from each entity within an, and/or another method where all interested parties have an equal vote.
2. The project review committee can either develop one consensus scoring self-evaluation for each project; complete an independent scoring criterion and then use the average as the final score; have one entity that is not related to the project to conduct an independent review of another entities project and have that one score as the final; or another un-biased review process predetermined by the review committee. The scoring criteria Excel table will be provided by the assigned DWR Grant Manager. This scoring criteria should be used as it is and cannot be edited in any way. Any applications who have edited the scoring criteria will be thrown out and not awarded any grant funds.
3. Once the final score(s) is obtained for each project, the projects should be ranked based upon the scoring criteria and listed highest to lowest.
4. If the project review committee determine that a lower scoring project(s) should be higher on the ranking list due to available funding, accessibility to the site, already completed environmental/permitting/design, then the project review committee must be responsible for fully documenting and justifying why a lower scoring project was included within the Spending Plan versus a higher scoring project.

At the Borrego Springs Watermaster Board Meeting on Monday, December 10, 2022, the Watermaster Board (Watermaster) discussed their thoughts on the Project Review Committee (PRC) and conveyed their desires to Borrego Water District (BWD) staff attending the meeting. At its meeting on Tuesday, January 11, the BWD Board discussed their understanding and thoughts on the PRC process and constitution of the PRC. Direction was given by the BWD Board to Dudek to prepare a narrative description of a PRC process in conformance with expressed wishes of the BWD Board and others present at the January 11, 2022 meeting and in accordance with DWR's language extracted above as well as the expressed direction the BWD Board was given by DWR staff members.

The intent of outlining the steps associated with the Prop 68 PRC project scoring and ranking process is to provide the Interested Parties, Stakeholders and the Public with a clear explanation of the mechanics of the process and to communicate that the process must have integrity, be impartial and achieve the most competitive suite of eligible projects for inclusion in the Spending Plan and Grant Application. This discussion only addresses the PRC and does not discuss the solicitation of projects or the generation of project descriptions prior to the deadline for project submittal to the BWD (applicant for the DWR application). BWD sincerely appreciates the efforts undertaken by all IPs in developing its project submittals.

The PRC will utilize the Scoring Criteria contained in Table 7 of the December 2021 PSP prepared by DWR as the Scoring Criteria for members of the PRC to use in evaluating, scoring and ranking projects for the Draft Project List

Project Review Committee (PRC)– Constitution

The PRC comprises eleven (11) members. Specifically:

- Two (2) members appointed by and representing the Borrego Water District/BWD Board (Tammy Baker, Diane Johnson);
- Three (3) members appointed by and representing the Borrego Springs Watermaster/Watermaster Board, (Jim Bennett, Mike Seley, Shannon Smith);
- Six (6) members who appoint one Interested Parties' (IP) representative for each Project, i.e. each Interested Party submitting a Project for consideration may designate a representative to sit on the PRC (David Garmon [BVEF], Robert Staehle [Tubb Canyon Desert Conservancy], Mike McElhatton [ADBNHA], Jim Wilson [Christmas Circle Community Park], Mark Stevens [BSUSD], Atley Keller, [LGC/Stewardship Council]. FINAL PRC Member List is subject to change due to further project refinement and potential consolidation.

The PRC process will also be facilitated by Meagan Wylie in an impartial role. If any PRC member feels actions or comments made by Ms. Wylie during this process do not meet this important criterion, please raise the issue immediately to BWD or the Group if in a public meeting.

A. Step One – Distribution and Receipt of Submitted Projects

All projects for consideration for scoring, ranking and inclusion in the Application must be received by the BWD no later than 5:00 PM on Thursday, January 20, 2022. On Friday, January 21, 2022, the BWD (after collating all the received Projects into one document) will distribute a copy of DWR's PSP, the summary packet of all proposed projects, the Table 7 Scoring Criteria and the goals of the GMP to each member of the PRC (see above members of the PRC). These will all be placed on the BWD and BSWM websites as well.

B. Step Two – Orientation to the PRC Process and Responsibilities Distribution

On Friday, January 21st from 2:30 PM to 3:30 PM, the PRC will attend a Zoom meeting for the purposes of orienting them to the PRC Guidelines, the PSP, the DWR Guidelines, the Scoring Criteria and getting questions answered that the PRC members and public have. This will be recorded and shared via email and on the respective websites of the BWD and the BSWM.

C. Step Three – Questions and Answers from the PRC

On Wednesday, January 26th from 3:00 PM to 5:30 PM, the PRC will have an opportunity to ask and answer any questions via a Zoom meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to provide an opportunity for PRC questions on projects and process to be answered. Additionally, any questions on projects and process that have been received from the public will be discussed and answered.

D. Step Four - PRC Review Process, Preliminary Scoring and Submittal of Preliminary Scores

Between January 21, 2022 and Monday, January 31, each member of the PRC shall review all materials provided to them. Following review of each Project, a preliminary score will be provided by each PRC member. Even if a PRC member has questions, the PRC member is expected to review and provide a **preliminary score** on each project (except their own project) for submittal to the BWD no later than 5:00 PM on Monday, January 31st.

All members of the PRC will be scoring all projects both during the individual preliminary stage and at the PRC meeting, with the exception of projects where they are the Interested Party, i.e. no person may score and rank their own project.

All scoring sheets with preliminary score and a list of any questions from PRC members on individual projects, must be submitted to BWD no later than 5:00 PM on Monday, January 31st.

BWD support staff will collate all scoring sheets and preliminary scores. BWD support staff will utilize all the submitted scoring sheets and tabulate one averaged project score per project. BWD support staff will distribute the summary packet including all scoring sheets submitted and the summary scoring sheet. These materials will be distributed to PRC members by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, February 1st, 2022. These materials will also be posted on the BWD and BSWM websites.

E. Step Five – PRC Meeting Convened Via Zoom and Open to the Public – Wednesday, February 2nd from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM (and also potentially Thursday, February 3rd, 2022)

On Wednesday, February 2nd, 2022 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM, the PRC will convene via Zoom. The link to the meeting must be shared on the BWD and Watermaster websites and all PRC members must be present. The PRC meeting will be conducted in a formal manner. The facilitator will convene the meeting and provide an outline

describing the PRC process to all attendees. The facilitator will also provide a high-level summary of all projects received and share the preliminary scores for each project. Should the PRC not be completed on February 2nd, the PRC must convene on February 3rd from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM. **All PRC members must be at the February 2nd and February 3rd. If for any reason a PRC member cannot be in attendance at one or both of these meetings, a qualified alternate must be designated to represent the agency/project and fully participate in the process.**

The facilitator will support the PRC as a whole in reviewing and conducting group scoring for each project. The facilitator will move through each project individually and provide opportunities for PRC members to ask and answers questions and revise preliminary scoring.

The specific process is as follows:

1. The facilitator will request that each member of the PRC share any and all questions they have on the project being reviewed.
2. If there are questions on a project or projects, the IP representing the project will have an opportunity to provide any additional information.
3. The facilitator will give the PRC members the opportunity to change their preliminary score.
4. BWD support staff will make changes to the preliminary tabulation using any revised scores resulting from the process outlined above.

Once all projects have received a PRC draft project score pursuant to the PRC process, a draft project list will be generated, and the ranking process can ensue. The facilitator and support staff will rank the projects. Those projects that receive the most points consistent with the scoring criteria and deemed eligible projects will be ranked the highest.

Once the Draft project list has been generated, the PRC will have one more opportunity to review the ranked projects. The Draft project list requires consensus on the projects' ranking. Prior to meeting closure and PRC approval of the ranked project list, any PRC member will have an opportunity to raise a re-ranking of a project pursuant to the following language in the PSP: 1) available funding; 2) accessibility to the site; 3) already completed environmental/permitting/design. The PRC must be responsible for fully documenting and justifying why a lower scoring project was included within the Spending Plan. Any changes in the ranking need to be justified and consensus on a re-ranking must occur by a majority vote of the PRC. IPs cannot vote on their own projects; they must recuse themselves from voting.

F. Step Six – Generation of the Spending Plan and Final Project List

At the close of the PRC process, the PRC will have generated a Draft Project List. The Draft project list will be posted on the BWD and Watermaster websites. The Draft project list only becomes final after it is adopted by the BWD Board, which is the Applicant for the Grant Application.

The Draft Project List will be the basis upon which the Spending Plan is generated. Per the PSP, the Spending Plan can be submitted to DWR prior to application submittal, and it is encouraged to be submitted on the requisite template. It is the intent of the BWD to submit the Spending Plan to DWR no later than February 4, 2022.

II. Project Review and Scoring Guidance

PRC members are expected and required to be familiar with the SGMA Legislation, the Borrego Spring Groundwater Management Plan and are required to review and be familiar with DWR's SGM Grant Program SGMA Implementation Guidelines (Guidelines) ([Proposition 68 Sustainable Groundwater Grant Program 2019 Funding Guidelines \(ca.gov\)](#), December 2021) the SGM Grant Program SGMA Implementation PSP (PSP) (December 2021, ([2021 SGMA Implementation PSP \(ca.gov\)](#)). Extracted portions of the GMP, Guidelines and PSP are included in this section. Finally, all projects will be scored consistent with Table 7 of DWRs PSP

In conducting preliminary scores for all projects (**with the exception of projects where they are the Interested Party, i.e. no person may score and rank their own projects**), PRC members should be exercising due diligence in the following tasks:

- reviewing project descriptions provided in the packet.
- evaluating the alignment of the individual project proposals with the Guidelines and the PSP in terms of the goals of the Guidelines and PSP and the eligibility discussions provided and attached.
- making notes and providing a rationale to justify the score given on any individual scoring criterion and on the overall score.

All project costs provided on all projects must be justified, i.e. all budget components must be supported by one or more of the following items in the list and all IPs must be prepared to provide the documentation/budget justification. Budget justification:

- an engineer's cost estimate
 - plan, specifications
 - total design costs
- construction engineering
- permit costs
- environmental analysis costs
- a fully developed budget including but not limited to:
 - materials (number and cost, quantity or unit cost),
 - labor rates,
 - number of hours per task, sub-task or project component

Match – All projects should discuss if they have match and what they are proposing for match.

II A. Executive Summary from the Borrego Valley Groundwater Basin Groundwater Management Plan (GMP)

The Borrego Springs' Alternative to a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) ***is the Judgment, Physical Solution, and GMP***. The Stipulated Judgement includes the complete GMP as an attachment.

- A bookmarked version of the Judgment is available here: https://borregospringswatermaster.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/stipulated-judgment-04-08-2021_bookmarked.pdf
- Links to the settlement agreement and stipulated judgment documents are available on the "Judgment" Page of the BWD website here: <https://www.borregowd.org/judgment/>
- Bookmarked Chapters and the complete Groundwater Management Plan is available on the Water Master's website here: <https://borregospringswatermaster.com/documents/>

Note from the Watermaster website:

A Draft Final Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) was prepared for the Borrego Springs Groundwater Subbasin (Basin) of the Borrego Valley Groundwater Basin by the Borrego Water District (BWD) and the County of San Diego (County) acting as the Borrego Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for the Basin. This Groundwater Management Plan (GMP) includes modifications to the GSP to conform its terms to the Stipulated Judgment proposed in the pending comprehensive adjudication of groundwater rights in the Basin. The "Physical Solution" proposed for the Basin consists of the GMP and the Stipulated Judgment, as overseen by the Court; provided, however, that the provisions of the Stipulated Judgment control over and supersede any contrary provisions contained in the GMP. The stipulating parties propose to substitute the proposed Watermaster in place of the GSA, and to seek the Department of Water Resources' approval of the Physical Solution to serve as an alternative to the GSP, as authorized by Water Code sections 10733.6 and 10737.4. Accordingly, all references to the GSA and GSP should be substituted with "Watermaster" and "GMP", respectively.

Executive Summary Extracted from Groundwater Management Plan for the Borrego Springs Groundwater Subbasin | January 2020

https://borregospringswatermaster.com/wp-content/uploads/Groundwater_Management_Plan/A.-Cover-Pages.pdf

The Borrego Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA, Agency), which comprises the Borrego Water District (BWD) and the County of San Diego (County), developed a Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP, Plan) to provide a structure to enable local government, groundwater users and the local community to work together to achieve sustainable use of groundwater resources in the Borrego Springs Groundwater Subbasin (Subbasin) (California Department of Water Resources (DWR) Basin No. 7.024.01) of the Borrego Valley Groundwater Basin. The GSP was subsequently repurposed as a Groundwater Management Plan (GMP), an integral part of a Physical Solution in a groundwater rights adjudication consistent with the requirements of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). The purpose of this GMP is to refine and expedite implementation of the Physical Solution and to avoid litigation over the GSP and its associated Project and Management Actions (PMAs).

The GSP and this resulting GMP was developed through a process of stakeholder negotiation among major water users, landowners and government agencies. Specifically, this GMP is adopted as part of the Physical Solution by means of a Judgment Pursuant to Stipulation in [INSERT CASE NAME] (Judgment). The Judgment was agreed to by Stipulating Parties accounting for more than 75% of groundwater production and more than 50% of non-minimal producer well owners as an alternative to the GSA/GSP process for the Borrego Springs Subbasin under SGMA (California Water Code Sections 10733.6 and 10737.4). This GMP includes and is to be interpreted and implemented consistent with and subject to the provisions of the Judgment. The provisions of the Judgment control over and supersede any contrary provisions contained in this GMP.

ES 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The multi-agency Borrego Valley GSA consists of BWD, which has water supply and water management responsibilities within its Borrego Springs service area; and the County, which has land use responsibilities and implements the County's Groundwater Ordinance throughout the Subbasin. The Watermaster Board appointed under the Judgment takes the place of the GSA.

Current groundwater use in the Subbasin, which is located in northeastern unincorporated San Diego County, greatly exceeds groundwater recharge (i.e., the basin is being overdrafted). The Subbasin has been designated as being in critical overdraft by the DWR. According to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), "A basin is subject to critical overdraft when continuation of present water management practices would probably result in significant adverse overdraft-related environmental, social, or economic impacts." The intent of this GMP is to achieve long-term groundwater sustainability by restoring balance to (i.e., reaching "sustainability" in) the Subbasin no later than 2040, as required by SGMA.

The overarching aim of SGMA is to establish and achieve the “sustainability goal” for the Subbasin through the development and implementation of a GSP or approved alternative. In enacting SGMA, the Legislature also set forward more specific purposes underlying the legislation, which include providing for sustainable management of groundwater, avoiding six designated “undesirable results” to groundwater resources that could occur without proper management, enhancing the ability of local agencies to take action to protect groundwater resources, and preserving the security of water rights to the greatest extent possible consistent with sustainable management of groundwater.

The intent of the Physical Solution is to meet the requirements of SGMA. To this end, this Plan includes the scientific and other background information about the Subbasin required by SGMA and its implementing regulations. The Plan is also intended to provide a roadmap for how sustainability is to be reached in the Subbasin, including through projects and management actions (PMAs) to be taken, as well as the financial and other implications of implementing the Plan. At the same time, the GMP also recognizes that while some management actions can be taken early on in the Physical Solution implementation process, other actions are to be implemented over time.

SGMA also mandates that steps be taken to ensure the broadest possible public participation in the GSP development process. From its inception, the GSA was focused on soliciting and receiving input from a wide variety of stakeholders regarding Subbasin issues. As part of the GSA’s effort to consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater (as defined by California Water Code Section 10723.2), the GSA formed the Borrego Basin GSP Advisory Committee made up of key stakeholders from the Borrego Springs community. Beginning in March 2017, the Advisory Committee provided regular input to aid the GSA in the development of the planning and policy recommendations contained in the GSP.

ES 2.0 SUMMARY OF BASIN SETTING AND CONDITIONS

DWR has designated the 98-square-mile Subbasin as high priority and critically overdrafted. The majority of recharge that replenishes the Subbasin comes from streamflow exiting the mountains onto the desert alluvial fans that abut the mountain front. Land uses consist primarily of private land under County jurisdiction, and both the private land and the Subbasin itself are surrounded on nearly all sides by the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. The developed land uses in the Subbasin include residential, agricultural, recreational, and commercial.

As represented in the “Hydrogeologic Conceptual Model” developed for the GSP, which is based in large part on work conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey, the unconsolidated sediments that fill the Subbasin are divided into three principal aquifers referred to as the upper, middle and lower aquifers, with the highest yielding wells located in the upper aquifer.

Prior to development in the Subbasin, the natural direction of groundwater flow was predominantly from the northwest near Coyote Creek to the southeast toward the Borrego Sink. The shallowest groundwater-level elevations occurred east of the Borrego Sink, an area of natural drainage in the middle of the valley that is dry most of the time. Groundwater levels and water quality in the Subbasin have been tracked by county, state, and federal agencies for over 50 years. The Watermaster will monitor groundwater levels from a network consisting of approximately 46 wells.

Over the past 65 years, groundwater levels have declined as much as 126 feet (average of nearly 2 feet per year) in the northern part of the Subbasin and about 87 feet (average of 1.3 feet per year) in the west-central part. In the southeastern part of the Subbasin where less groundwater has been pumped, groundwater levels have remained relatively stable along the perimeter of the Subbasin during the same time period. Recent pumping in the South Management Area has resulted in a localized groundwater level depression south of the Borrego Sink. Given the physical characteristics of the groundwater within the Subbasin, water quality, and other factors, this GMP establishes three management areas for the Subbasin: the North Management Area, the Central Management Area, and the South Management Area. These management areas will be utilized to monitor the status of groundwater quality and other SGMA parameters, and measure the progress towards achieving sustainability goals.

Defining the Subbasin setting also requires an examination of groundwater quality issues. In the Subbasin, the most critical aspect of water quality is ensuring that available supplies at municipal well sites are and remain in compliance with drinking water standards. Groundwater quality provided by BWD water supply wells meets California drinking water maximum contaminant levels without treatment. Arsenic concentrations were increasing in multiple BWD water supply wells until 2014, but have since decreased. Historically, there have been nitrate-related water quality problems encountered in BWD wells that led to well reconstruction, abandonment, and replacement.

Total dissolved solids and sulfate are presently the only water quality constituents that show increasing concentrations with simultaneous declines in groundwater levels. Overall, the long standing overdraft has resulted in changes to water quality in the Subbasin over time. High salinity, poor quality connate water is thought to occur in deeper formational materials in select areas of the aquifer as well as shallow groundwater in the vicinity of the Borrego Sink in the southern portion of the Subbasin. BWD does not operate wells in the immediate vicinity of the Borrego Sink. The Watermaster will monitor water quality from a groundwater quality network consisting of 30 wells.

The water budget for the Subbasin provides an accounting and assessment of the average annual volume of groundwater and surface water entering (i.e., inflow) and leaving (i.e., outflow) the basin and enables an accounting of the cumulative change in groundwater in storage over time.

From 1945 to 2016, about 520,000 acre-feet of water was estimated to have been removed from storage. At present, the total baseline pumping allocation (BPA)¹ of 24,215 acre-feet per year (AFY) greatly exceeds the Subbasin's estimated long-term sustainable yield of 5,700 AFY. The BPA is defined as the amount of groundwater each pumper in the Subbasin is allocated prior to SGMA-mandated reductions, and serves as a cap from which annual pumping reductions to reach the sustainable yield by no later than 2040 will proceed.

ES 3.0 OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS, MINIMUM THRESHOLDS, AND MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES

To maintain a viable water supply for current and future beneficial uses and users of groundwater in the Subbasin, the Physical Solution's sustainability goal is to ensure that by 2040, and thereafter within the planning and implementation horizon of this GMP (50 years), the Subbasin is operated within its sustainable yield and does not exhibit undesirable results as defined by California Water Code Section

10721(x). The GMP has established minimum thresholds and measurable objectives for the following sustainability indicators determined to be a current and/or potential future undesirable result.

Groundwater in Storage

The sustainability goal is to halt the overdraft condition in the Subbasin by bringing the groundwater demand in line with sustainable yield by 2040. This will be monitored by estimating the change of groundwater volume in storage every year, based on the observed changes in groundwater levels.

Chronic Lowering of Groundwater Levels

The sustainability goal is for groundwater levels to stabilize or improve and to ensure groundwater is maintained at adequate levels for key municipal wells. Observed groundwater levels will be compared to the Borrego Valley Hydrologic Model (BVHM) projected levels for the Physical Solution implementation period.

Water Quality

The sustainability goal is for California Title 22 drinking water standards to continue to be met for potable water sources, and that water quality in irrigation wells be suitable for agricultural and recreational irrigation use. Water quality monitoring will occur throughout Physical Solution implementation.

ES 4.0 OVERVIEW OF PROJECTS AND MANAGEMENT ACTIONS

The primary management tool to eliminate the overdraft is to require aggressive pumping cut-backs to a level that does not exceed the Subbasin's estimated sustainable yield of 5,700 AFY before 2040. Reaching this goal requires an approximately 76% reduction in pumping compared to the BPA. The purpose of the GMP's PMAs are primarily to (1) reduce water demand within the Subbasin by reducing the amount of water allocated to non-de minimis users and (2) maintain water quality suitable for current and future beneficial uses. The selected PMAs are described, as follows:

PMA No. 1 – Water Trading Program

The Water Trading Program is intended to enable groundwater users to purchase needed groundwater resources to maintain economic activities in the Subbasin, encourage and incentivize water conservation, and facilitate adjustment of pumping allocations as water demands and Subbasin conditions fluctuate during the Physical Solution implementation. The Water Trading Program will be implemented as set forth in the Judgment.

PMA No. 2 – Water Conservation Program

The Water Conservation Program would consist of separate components for the three primary water use sectors: agricultural, municipal, and recreation. A water conservation program will be highly dependent upon securing funding such as through existing and future grants and low interest loan programs.

PMA No. 3 – Pumping Reduction Program

Each non-de minimis groundwater user within the Subbasin will be assigned an allocation based on its historical groundwater use. That allocation will be reduced incrementally as necessary over the Physical Solution implementation period such that the total extraction from the Subbasin will be equal to the estimated sustainable yield target (the initial sustainable yield target is 5,700 AFY) by 2040. Mandatory water metering for all non-de minimis groundwater users will take place following adoption of this GMP. The Pumping Reduction Program will be implemented as set forth in the Judgment.

PMA No. 4 – Voluntary Fallowing of Agricultural Land

The voluntary Fallowing Program will create a process to convert high water use irrigated agriculture land to low water use open space or public land, on a voluntary basis. Once implemented, the Fallowing Program would provide property owners with transferable BPAs in exchange for land fallowing. This PMA is implemented by the Water Trading Program, PMA No. 1 above.

PMA No. 5 – Water Quality Optimization

The Water Quality Optimization program is intended to identify as-needed direct and indirect treatment options for BWD and other pumpers to optimize groundwater quality and its use and minimize the need for expensive water treatment to meet drinking water standards.

PMA No. 6 – Intra-Subbasin Water Transfers

The purpose of intra-subbasin transfer program is to mitigate existing and future reductions in groundwater storage and groundwater quality impairment by establishing an intrabasin conveyance capability for transferring groundwater production from higher to lower production alternative areas in the subbasin. This PMA would only be implemented after the Watermaster evaluates the feasibility and effectiveness of utilizing new or existing well sites in the subbasin where groundwater conditions are more favorable for continued groundwater extraction.

Watermaster Responsibilities

The Watermaster is responsible for implementing the Physical Solution over SGMA's planning and implementation horizon and thereafter, with Subbasin sustainability required to be achieved by January 31, 2040. The Watermaster will submit annual and more detailed 5-year reports to DWR by April 1 of each year. The annual reports will document new data being collected to track groundwater conditions within the Subbasin, monitor progress on implementation of PMAs, and present an evaluation of measured data in comparison to interim milestones for each sustainability indicator. The 5-year reports provide the Watermaster an opportunity to evaluate the success and/or challenges in Physical Solution implementation, including reporting on the effectiveness of PMAs. If knowledge of Subbasin conditions have changed based on updated data, if management criteria (e.g., sustainable yield, minimum thresholds, or interim milestones) need to be modified, or if PMAs need to be modified or added, revisions to the Physical Solution may be proposed and the necessary steps taken by the Watermaster.

The GSA has performed substantial work toward estimating the cost of GSP implementation. Chapter 5, Plan Implementation, contains a breakdown of tasks and associated cost estimates. The total estimated GSP implementation cost for the anticipated 20-year implementation period is \$20,352,000. This estimate includes (1) operations and monitoring costs; (2) management, administration, and other costs;

(3) 5-year annual reviews; (4) 10% contingency; (5) PMAs development; and (6) California Environmental Quality Act review but does not include the implementation of all PMAs or final costs incurred by BWD for internal management and administration. Additional budget will be required to implement PMAs once they have been developed. In general, the GSA planned to fund GSP implementation using a combination of administrative pumping fees, assessments/parcel taxes, and/or grants. The Watermaster's costs for Physical Solution implementation are likely less than those GSP implementation costs estimated by the GSA due to anticipated efficiencies entailed by the negotiated terms of the Physical Solution that have been agreed to by participating pumpers.

II.B Per the PSP Guidelines, eligibility is discussed below.

All projects for scoring and raking and for ultimate inclusion in the Spending Plan and Application must be eligible and must be consistent with the Guidelines and PSP.

B. Eligible Project Types

Eligible project types for the SGMA Implementation grants must include one or more of the activities listed below. All projects must be consistent with the goals of the GSP or Alternative to a GSP. This includes projects that fill in known data gaps and comments received from DWR after review of a submitted GSP or Alternative to a GSP, if received. Detailed information is provided in the individual PSPs.

2021 Budget Act: SGMA Implementation

The 2021 Budget Act provides \$171 million in General Funds for projects and planning activities related to the implementation of SGMA, which can include:

- Revisions, updates, and/or modifications of a GSPs;
- Revisions, updates, and/or modifications of an Alternative to a GSP; and/or
- Capital improvement activities as listed within a GSP or Alternative to a GSP.

In addition, \$57 million of the available funding for one or more of the following purposes:

- Geophysical investigations of groundwater basins to identify recharge potential (Aerial Electromagnetic (AEM) surveys);
- Early implementation of existing regional flood management plans that incorporate groundwater recharge (e.g., recharge basins incorporating flood or stormwater); or
- Projects that would complement efforts of a local GSP, that provide for floodplain expansion to benefit groundwater recharge or habitat (e.g., a recharge basin adjacent to a waterbody using peak flows for groundwater recharge).

Examples of eligible project activities, tasks, and/or components can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Filling data gaps in a GSP(s) or Alternative to a GSP
- Project development activities (e.g., feasibility studies, design, permits, environmental documents)
- Long-term planning studies
- Technical and planning assistance for Underrepresented Communities
- Interested party outreach and engagement
- Vulnerability or risk assessments
- Technical assistance for Underrepresented Communities
- Engagement and outreach to Underrepresented Communities
- Evaluation of groundwater management needs

Underrepresented Community Technical Assistance Program (TA Program)

The SGM Grant Program began a TA Program in late 2021 to identify Underrepresented Communities within medium and high priority basins, including COD basins, and determine the needs, risks, and vulnerabilities of the communities with relationship to the implementation of SGMA. Outreach and engagement began in late 2021 and a report of the findings will be finalized by fall 2022. The need of technical assistance within Underrepresented Communities far exceeds the current funding available for the TA Program. The SGM Grant Program will provide an additional \$2 million in General Funds to a technical assistance provider to continue this important work. A minimum of \$1 million must be used to fulfill technical assistance in communities identified by the TA Program and work shall be equitably distributed throughout all regions of the State to ensure all Underrepresented Communities have access to technical assistance that will address their needs, risks, and vulnerabilities with respect to the implementation of SGMA. The technical assistance provider will be encouraged to conduct a minimum of one community meeting in each of the basins that includes a representative of all GSA(s) and/or responsible entity within the basin. All findings or conclusions shall be reported to the local GSA(s) and/or responsible entity in a meeting that includes a representative from DWR. The goal of the TA Program is to foster strong working relationships and effective communications between the Underrepresented Communities and their local groundwater sustainability agency responsible for implementing SGMA to ensure that the community's needs, risks, and/or vulnerabilities will be properly identified and addressed in the GSP(s) or Alternative(s) to a GSP.

Proposition 68: Implementation

Activities and/or tasks that include the development of groundwater recharge projects with surface water, stormwater, recycled water, and other conjunctive use projects; and/or projects that prevent or clean up contamination of groundwater that serves as a source of drinking water (Public Resources Code § 80146(a)). Other eligible project types are projects and programs that support water supply reliability, water conservation, and water use efficiency and water banking, exchange, and reclamation.

II.C Per the PSP, eligible costs, payments and project types and examples are discussed below:

H. Eligible Costs

For costs to be eligible for reimbursement, the costs must be consistent with the "reimbursable costs" definition contained in Appendix B and must be incurred after the approval date of the 2021 Guidelines and PSP and prior to the termination of the grant agreement. **Advanced funds will not be provided to Grantees.**

C. Eligible Costs and Payment

Eligible reimbursable costs are those that were: incurred by the Grantees after the date the 2021 Guidelines and PSP were approved, meet the conditions of the "Eligible Costs" as outlined in Section III., and defined as "reimbursable costs" in Appendix B of the 2021 Guidelines. DWR's standard method of payment is reimbursement in arrears. Funds are disbursed after DWR approves the submittal of the DWR invoice form and required backup documentation by the Grantee. Grantees shall invoice and report on a quarterly basis only, except for the technical assistance provider. Additionally, DWR reserves the right to withdraw awarded funds due to lack of responsiveness on the part of the Grantee in submitting invoices and reporting and associated deliverables.

B. Eligible Project Types

Eligible project types for the SGM Grant Program SGMA Implementation – Planning and Projects must be consistent with the purpose of the Budget Act of 2021 and Proposition 68, which include:

- Activities and/or tasks that consist of the development of groundwater recharge projects with surface water, stormwater, recycled water, and other conjunctive use projects;
- Projects that prevent or clean up contamination of groundwater that serve as a source of drinking water (Public Resources Code § 80146(a));
- Projects and programs that support water supply reliability, water conservation, and water use efficiency and water banking, exchange, and reclamation;
- Geophysical investigation(s) of groundwater basins to identify recharge potential; early implementation of existing regional flood management plans that incorporate groundwater recharge; or projects that would complement efforts of a local GSP, that provide for floodplain expansion to benefit groundwater recharge or habitat; and
- Revisions, updates, and/or modifications to a GSP or Alternative to a GSP. The Project or Component must fill known data gaps and address comments received from DWR after its review of a submitted GSP or Alternative to a GSP, if received. If the applicant has not received comments from DWR on their GSP or Alternative to a GSP, the Project or Component must be consistent with SGMA regulations and GSP requirements.

Eligible projects include those activities associated with the planning and implementation of a GSP or Alternative to a GSP and must also be consistent with the goals within the GSP or Alternative to a GSP.

Projects that are in basins determined to be probationary under SGMA by the State Water Board at or after the time of application submittal **are** eligible for this grant program to allow for those applicants to continue working towards sustainability. The project area and service area must be within the most current DWR Bulletin 118 basin that are designated by DWR as medium or high priority basins, including COD basins, by the latest SGMA Basin Prioritization.

The use of the term “project” refers to the activities and/or tasks related to the planning or implementation of a GSP or Alternative to a GSP and can include multiple components and/or tasks. A proposal, or project for purposes of this PSP, refers to all the supporting documentation submitted that details the actions that are proposed for the funding. The application will describe a single proposal/project; however, each application may contain multiple components and tasks that collectively make up a single proposal/project. See the 2021 Guidelines, Appendix B for further definitions of components and project.

- Impact studies on domestic and de minimis groundwater well users
- Annual reporting for GSPs and Alternative to a GSP
- Identifying and proper destruction of abandoned wells
- Identifying of recharge location(s)
- Soil carbon enhancement and Healthy Soil Initiative activities
- Native Yield studies
- Coordination activities with adjacent GSA(s)
- Instrumentation for monitoring wells (e.g., pressure transducers)
- Pilot or demonstration projects meeting the purpose of SB-170 and Proposition 68
- Installation of meters on groundwater production and agricultural wells
- Installation of monitoring well(s)
- Connection of communities to a municipal water supply (except laterals on private land)
- Groundwater recharge projects with surface water, stormwater, recycled water, and other conjunctive use projects
- Groundwater contaminant remediation or prevention projects for groundwater that serves as a source of drinking water
- Construction, rehabilitation, or expansion of conveyance facilities for groundwater recharge projects
- Wastewater treatment and water recycling facility upgrades for groundwater recharge project sources
- Stormwater and runoff capture projects that support groundwater recharge
- Groundwater recharge facility expansion
- Seawater barrier injection wells
- Groundwater recharge projects that address groundwater dependent ecosystems (GDEs)
- Projects and programs that support water supply reliability, water conservation, water use efficiency and water banking, exchange, and reclamation
- Planning, design, and environmental documentation only as a task of a Project or Component of an overall project (not a standalone task).

Per the PSP, **examples of INELIGIBLE project activities, tasks or components are discussed below:**

Examples of ineligible project activities, tasks, and/or components can include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Gifts of public funds to a private person or entity (e.g., gift certificates and other incentives to attend public meetings, complete surveys, etc.)
- Purchasing of low-flow and/or high-density appliances
- Water markets and trading programs
- Purchases of water supplies
- Rebate programs
- Travel expenses, except mileage to the project location from a pre-approved starting location
- Food and drink
- Per diem expenses
- Federal and state taxes
- Tuition
- Overhead/Indirect/Markup – for Grantees, consultants/contractors, or their subs.

NOTE: the maximum grant administration budget cannot exceed 10% and the maximum construction administration budget cannot exceed 15% of the requested grant funds. Grantees shall invoice and report on a quarterly basis only. The technical assistance provider may invoice and report on a monthly basis.

II.D Table 7 of the PSP – Scoring Criteria

TABLE 7 – APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA				
Section Name	Q#	Questions	Possible Points	Scoring Guidance
General	1	Was a description of the proposed Project or Component provided? Did it explain why this Project or Component was chosen over all others identified in the Plan in terms of benefits provided, communities served, measurable objectives, minimum thresholds, plan implementation timeline, and feasibility? If you feel a question component does not apply to your proposed project, please explain why it is not applicable. (Example "Measurable objective not applicable because project is planning only".) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No funds will be awarded without clear justification for the proposed tasks/subtasks. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 – Fully addressed 3 – Mostly addressed, with minor details not included or unclear 2 – Mostly addressed, with significant details missing or unclear 1 – Marginally addressed 0 – Not addressed
General Implementation Only	2- Imp	Does the Project or Component provide a description of quantifiable benefits? Was an explanation of the benefits that are expected to be realized from the Project or Component provided, along with how those benefits will be evaluated and quantified? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain full points, 3 or more quantifiable benefits must be identified and fully supported with backup documentation. 	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4- At least three quantifiable benefits with explanations and supporting documents. 3 – Two quantifiable benefits with explanations and supporting documents. 2 – Two quantifiable benefits lacking explanations and supporting documents. 1 – One quantifiable benefit with explanations and supporting documents. 0 – Benefits provided but are not explained or quantified.
General Planning Only	2- Plan	Does the Project Description describe a well-coordinated proposal including a GSP(s) that encompasses the entire basin or describes why a portion of the basin is not covered in the proposal? Does it describe how well the multiple GSA(s) surrounding and within the basin are working together?	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 – Fully addressed 3 – Mostly addressed, with minor details not included or unclear 2 – Mostly addressed, with significant details missing or unclear 1 – Marginally addressed 0 – Not addressed
General	3	Does the Project or Component fully describe their plan for outreaching and enquiring interested parties (e.g., residents, local leaders, non-profit representing Underrepresented Communities, etc.) located within Underrepresented Communities? Does the outreach and engagement include interested parties during all phases of the Project or Component (e.g., planning, design, and implementation)? Can interested parties provide input and be involved in the decision-making processes? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To obtain full points, a minimum of three comment letters are required from the Underrepresented Communities. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 – Interested parties included on decision-making committees and fully engaged/involved in all aspects of the Project or Component 2 – Interested parties engaged/involved, but not included on decision-making committees 1 – Marginally addressed 0 – Not addressed
General	4	Was there a regional and Project map(s) depicting the site location, current conditions, and benefitting areas? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The information should be clear and easy to read. If not, the point will not be given. 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2 – Provided and all necessary information provided 1 – Provided but missing some information 0 – Not provided
General	5	Does the project benefit an Underrepresented Community (-ies)? Was there a map(s) depicting the Underrepresented Community (-ies) that the project will benefit? Does the project benefit an SDAC? Was there a map(s) depicting the SDAC(s) that the project will benefit? Please provide the amount of funding that will benefit both the Underrepresented Community and SDAC. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No points will be given if a map(s) is not provided. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3- Project benefits an SDAC(s) 2- Project benefits Underrepresented Community 1 – Project partially benefits either 0 – Project does not benefit either
General	6	Will the Project or Component positively impact issues associated with small water systems or private shallow domestic wells (e.g., groundwater contamination vulnerability, drawdown, etc.)? Was justification such as domestic well census results, water system maps, service area maps, etc. provided? Does the Project or Component help address the needs of the State Water Board's SAFER Program?	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 – Fully addressed 2 – Mostly addressed, with minor details not included or unclear 1 – Marginally addressed 0 – Not addressed
General	7	How does the proposed Project or Component address the Human Right to Water (AB 685 Section 106.3)? How will the Project or Component support the established policy of the State that every human being has the right to safe, clean, affordable, and accessible water adequate for human consumption, cooking, and sanitary purposes?	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4 – Fully addressed 3 – Mostly addressed, with minor details not included or unclear 2 – Mostly addressed, with significant details missing or unclear 1 – Marginally addressed 0 – Not addressed
Scope of Work	8	Did the proposal provide a description of the tasks/subtasks that will be completed as part of this grant Project? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No funds will be awarded without clear justification for the proposed tasks/subtasks. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 – Fully addressed 2 – Mostly addressed 1 – Marginally addressed 0 – Not addressed
Budget	9	Is a budget summary table provided? Is the budget reasonable for the project? Is the budget table tasks/subtasks provided in the scope of work coincide with the tasks/subtasks in the budget and schedule tables? Is local cost share included (minimum of 5%)? Local cost share may include costs expended on projects before grant agreement date. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local cost share is not required but necessary to obtain full points. 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 – Local cost share is provided, and budget is consistent and feasible 2 – Budget is consistent and feasible 1 – Budget is consistent but not feasible 0 – Not consistent and feasible
Schedule	10	Is the tasks/subtask in the schedule table consistent with those listed in the budget table and within the description in the application? Is the schedule feasible?	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 – Consistent and feasible 0 – Not consistent and feasible
Total Range of Possible Points			0-30	
(a) Average of Questions 1 – 8 for Multiple Component Applications				
(b) Total Score for Questions 9 and 10				
Total Points Overall Project:				
TOTAL FUNDING RECOMMENDED:				\$